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CONTENTS

OUR LAVENDER

- 8 From the Editor
- 10 A Word in Edgewise
- 12 Lavender Lens: First Thursday
- 14 Lavender Lens: Art Fairs
- 58 Lavender Lens: Anoka-Hennepin Pride

OUR SCENE

- 16 FOC Map
- 17 Bar Showcase
- 18 Arts: Spotlight
- 22 On the Record
- 24 Northern Pride: Duluth-Superior

OUR AFFAIRS

- 25 Against the Amendment
- 26 Back to School Survival Guide
- 38 Slice: Campus Eats & Coffee
- 44 Back to School Product Guide
- 46 Back to School: Nontraditional Students
- 48 Books: Charter Schools
- 49 Aliveness Project
- 50 Big Gay News
- 51 Interview: HRC's Chad Griffin

OUR LIVES

- 54 Leather Life

OUR HOMES

- 56 Ride Review: Toyota Camry

OUR RESOURCES

- 59 The Network
- 62 Community Connection
- 65 Classifieds

OUR VOICES

- 55 Skirting the Issues
- 61 Dateland
- 64 Ms. Behavior
- 64 Trolin
- 66 Through These Eyes

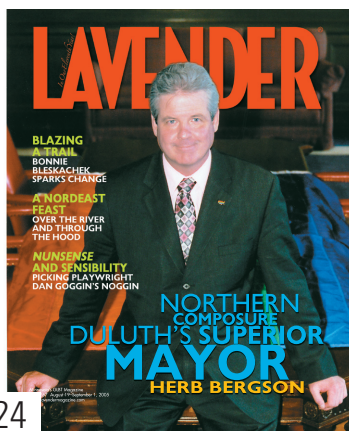
ON THE COVER

Welcome: Here's your Back to School Guide.

NOTE

The photo of Brent Foure in Issue 449's "From the Editor" was missing its photo credit: Sophia Hantzes.

Photo by Sophia Hantzes

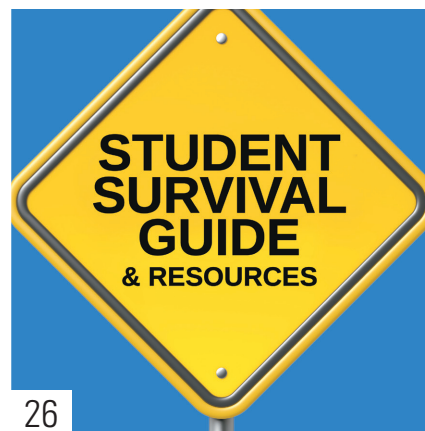


24

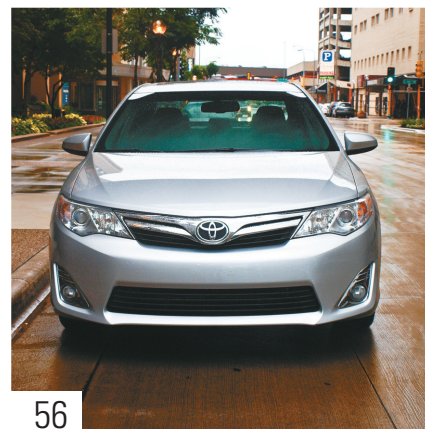
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51



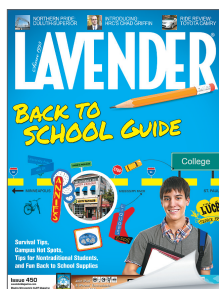
26



56

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WORKING WITH someone who's just out of college is hilarious. Okay, I'll focus that to say that working with Kathleen Watson is hilarious. She's right out of Augsburg College with a mind as sharp as her wit. She pretty much makes my head spin at times with an analysis here or an incredibly astute conclusion there. I can hear a 22-year-old me in her statements, though I never got to work my gender analysis into my job (until now) since my first job was working for Twin Cities Public Television's corporate subsidiary. Her areas of study were theatre and English, but she lives the gender and sexuality aspect. It's part of theatre and English more now than ever. One of her projects was about the "genderqueerness" of *Orlando*. She was steeping in cultural critique and now she's working at Lavender.

I give Kathleen a look when she says words like "genderqueer." The look can be summed up succinctly in the language of her generation:

WTF. OMG. LOL.

Genderqueer? No, I'm not laughing at it as a word or a concept... I'm laughing that I have no idea what she's talking about. I'm laughing because I'm out of the loop. I'm trying to find humor in being left behind by academia.

Back in my day, we were still trying to spell "woman" as "womyn." I don't think that ever took hold, transculturally. It was a landslide win to see the schoolwide shift from "freshman" to "first year" students. That Introduction to Gay & Lesbian Studies existed and Women's Studies was becoming an actual major (then to evolve to add the "Gender" and, finally, "Sexuality") were huge. Now, with genderqueer, cisgender, and new pronouns like "ze" and "hir" (see page 28), I am left with my jaw hanging open at the new and unknown puzzle pieces in my lexicon.

Often, the only way I know how to handle being so far out of my element is to laugh...and scamper off to Google. Thankfully, Kathleen has no problem teaching me what these words mean. She doesn't scoff or make an ageist comment—she's a pro. She tells me about

them. She teaches me.

Simply by being in an academic climate recently, she knows more. And, being that I left the academic climate in 1999, I know less.

Sort of.

It's not that I know less, it's that my knowledge is outdated.

And, by never going to college, it doesn't mean that someone knows less in terms of experience, but it does in terms of theory.

What does theory have to do with life?

Arguably, not a whole lot. It's good to know what has happened and why, but we're still going to live life how we live it, whether or not we know the theoretical basis behind what we're doing. Some of it's history, some of it's theory, and some of it is trivia. The world goes on turning while students have the privilege of attending classes and pontificating about the problems of the world, perhaps detachedly. But, because they may not be experiencing what they're studying, does it mean that they know less, too? Yes.

And that's where we come in. It's up to us to fill in the blanks that theory left. They have a whole lot of knowledge, but they don't have as much context or experience. Their perspective is both wide open and pigeon-holed.

This issue contains a Survival Guide for students, which also applies to the rest of us who aren't in school. We can all take those tips and accept or reject them as applicable to our lives. But, what's more, our columnists offer survival tips in every issue. Yes, whether attending school or not, we can all learn from what our writers put out there for us to read. Ms. Behavior gives advice; that's a pretty easy one in which we can find guidance. Justin Jones examines love using the metaphor of a waltz lesson; his words resonate with our romantic hearts. Jennifer Parello lets us learn from her (or her girlfriend's) mistakes. Ellie Krug pretty much broke my heart in her piece about the Envy of not becoming the person she is now...earlier.

We teach the students. The students teach us. We never really graduate.

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And laugh.

And for that, I'm grateful.

With thanks,

Andy ■

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Carthago Delenda Est – Again

CATO THE ELDER, soldier, Senator, builder of public works repeated this phrase in every speech—even as a non sequitur—he believed it was *that* important. “Carthago delendum est” translates as, “Carthage must be destroyed.”

Rome had won the first and second Punic wars, but was moving towards a third engagement. Persistently, and to the point of absurdity, Cato, reiterated the necessity of defeating the Carthaginians, and never let up until the Siege of Carthage (149 BC) resulted in that city’s complete demolition.

Bigotry is our Carthage, and while I’m not advocating a physical slash-and-burn and salt-the-earth policy, I do urge a similar vigilance and implacability in our efforts to obtain and insure equal civil rights for all our citizens. Minnesota already has laws on the books prohibiting gay marriage—at least their legal recognizance. In fact, gay marriages take place all the time. I recently attended one and believe the couple to be married in the eyes of the Divine—Rome and Romney notwithstanding.

Reporter Anderson Cooper wrote a moving letter that was made public through to columnist Andrew Sullivan. In it Cooper revealed, “The fact is, I’m gay, always have been, always will be, and I couldn’t be any more happy, comfortable with myself and proud.”

Immediately, radio host Janet Mefferd pounced, alerting her listeners that Cooper’s assertion could literally make them vomit, calling his letter “the neopagan story of the day” and comparing Cooper to Jerry Sandusky.

Following the recent death of astronaut Sally Ride, it was revealed that she lived and worked with her longtime female partner. I haven’t run across a reaction as vile as Mefferd’s, although Mitt Romney’s tweeted condolences, “Sally Ride ranks among the greatest of pioneers. I count myself among the millions of

Americans she inspired with her travels to space,” rank high for disingenuousness and hypocrisy. Romney knows full well Ride’s partner, Tam O’Shaughnessy will never see a penny of the astronaut’s death benefits or Social Security due other astronauts’ survivors.

I’m preaching to the choir, here, but choirs can sing before many audiences. Like Cato, I believe the situation is dire. Have conversations with allies, fellow gays.

Be present. Be active, not just election day, but in the remaining days.

Vote NO in NOvember.

Carthago delendum est. ▣

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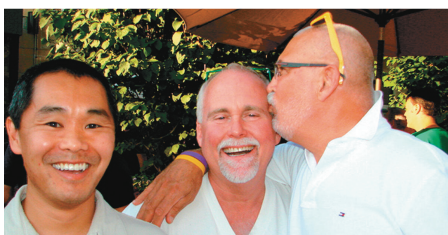
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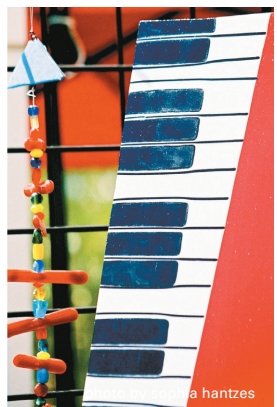
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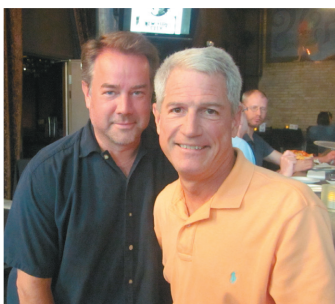
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SHOWCASE | photos by George Holdgrafer

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Lovers and Executioners. Photo by Charlie Gorrill

LOVERS AND EXECUTIONERS

Sept. 29 - Oct. 14

Gremlin Theatre, 2400 University Av. W., St. Paul
(612) 234-7135

www.theatreproprata.org

This play from the 1660s by Antoine Jacob de Montfleury has been adapted by John Strand with an eye toward its stylized commedia dell'arte roots. (Think harlequins and curvingly stylized movement.) Noe Tallen plays protagonist Julie, who was left on a desert island by her husband for three years but returns to civilization disguised as a man to seek vengeance on the cad.

Tallen recently shone as Brutus in Theatre Unbound's fine all-female cast staging of Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*. She got into the psychology of the man and manifested him quite remarkably, and one expects the same here, though Tallen quickly points out, "I have never played a woman pretending to be a man." She says "I usually approach a role with empathy regardless of gender...If I were to experience this situation, how would I react or feel. I don't think I will have any problem relating to Julie. I have pretended to be a man before, and a character who has been scorned is nice and juicy. Revenge is fun to play with! This play is a farce, exploring the frenetic humor and pratfalls, and balancing those with the tragic character flaws."

Carin Bratlie, who also directed the all-female *Julius Caesar* is also doing the same with *Lovers and Executioners*. Of Strand's adaptation she notes, "I was particularly struck by how modern the language is while still playing in rhyming couplets. It's very accessible and very fun. Lots of clever word play and hysterical characters."



A Tribute to Charlie Chaplin. Photo by Brad Dahlgaard

A TRIBUTE TO CHARLIE CHAPLIN

Sept. 6 & 7 at 7pm

A.M. Productions

www.brownpapertickets.com

Aura Marie has had her own share of struggles and has come to realize that seeing the humor and absurdity in all that is what keeps you sane. Marie, who likes to draw from the vaudeville tradition, is known for various characterizations, but Charlie Chaplin is especially close to her heart. Marie is also amazed and concerned that, when she's performed her tribute show, many people don't

know who he actually was. But she feels he's very much for our own time, nonetheless, because he looked at stereotypes; having been stereotyped by others herself, Marie says, "I can throw it back at people and laugh at myself and make other people laugh." She also confides something fascinating: men of various ages have come up to her after performances and said, "You know, I'm not a homosexual, but I find you very attractive."

TRICK BOXING

Through Sept. 12
Guthrie Theater's Dowling Studio,
818 So. 2nd St., Mpls.
(612) 377-2224

www.guthrietheater.org

It's been 10 years since this little theatrical gem hit the local scene and would go on to become a global sensation along with its two performers Brian Sostek and Megan McClellan (aka Sossy Mechanics). But if you haven't seen it in awhile, it will be worth checking out again to see the evolution. And if you've never seen it, you must. It's a marvelous physical theater experience. Sostek plays a boxer with financial woes, and McClellan plays a dancer. They amaze with boxing, dance, and intense dialogue that will make your head spin. It takes place in the 1930s when the underground economy was as big a factor as it's ever been. In our own time of economic despair, Sossy Mechanics, shows that imagination and an expanded view of ourselves may be just what we need to get through the hard times.

WAITING FOR GODOT

Through Sept. 30
Jungle Theater,
2951 Lyndale Av. S., Mpls.
(612) 822-7063

www.jungletheater.com

In 1953, Samuel Beckett's absurdist play changed the course of dramatic history. Whether you like it or not, *Waiting for Godot*, wherein two men wait at length for someone to meet them in a timeless space, is considered by some scholars and theater devotees to be the 20th Century's greatest play. What can be agreed on, however, is that it captures the sense of alienation that the post-World War II era seemed to feed on. Think about the horrors spun by populations loyal to Hitler, Hirohito, and Stalin and their subsequent ramifications and you can understand why.

Godot is often categorized with other great existentialist works like Camus's *The Plague*, Sartre's *No Exit*, and Albee's *The Zoo Story*.



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Waiting for Godot. Photos by Dan Norman

The Jungle revives the classic with Nathan Keepers and Jim Lichtscheidl as Estragon and Vladimir. You can expect a kind of clownish interpretation, an approach which serves productions of this play well. Also featured are Charles Schuminski, Allen Hamilton, and Bain Boehlke, who also directs.



Outside Providence. Photo by John Eastman

OUTSIDE PROVIDENCE
Through Sept. 15
Dark & Stormy Productions, 91 Tenth St., Mpls.
www.darkstormy.org

Since the 1980s, Edward Alan Baker has steadily developed a loyal fan base, yet he's still not as widely known as he ought to be. One of the Twin Cities' most accomplished directors, Matt Sciple, is doing his part to change that by staging three Baker one acts with themes of class and gender. He observes, "the main

characters are all women on the margins of society who are the children of women who treated them poorly, desperately attempting to break this cycle with their children. But Baker's plays—and these in particular—also concern the corrupting power of delusion and lies, and conversely, the healing power of the truth, however bleak that truth might be. Instead of despair, his characters find dark humor in their plight and hope in each other. They have little choice. They are all they have. And Baker, because he grew up in Providence, Rhode Island, on the specific streets and in the real places in his plays, clearly and fittingly, loves these characters with great affection, but a bracing lack of sentimentality." The titles of this regional premiere grouping are *Outside Providence*, *Dolores*, and *Rosemary With Ginger*. ■



Outside Providence. Photo by John Eastman

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at the Theater

SAMUEL BECKETT'S
**WAITING
FOR GODOT**

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**FRANK OCEAN** *Channel ORANGE*

Ocean made waves earlier this summer when he sort of/maybe came out, but his debut solo album would have earned plenty of notice regardless. Merging smooth R&B delivery with modern electronics and hip-hop (he's a member of the Odd Future collective, after all), Ocean crafts an album that is both modern and classic sounding. Leading singles like "Pyramids" and "Sweet Life" are only the tip here. The album is packed from beginning to end with compelling, engaging tunes that can still pack a dance floor. "Pyramids" itself is the album's centerpiece, a nearly 10-minute tune that ebbs and flows along its extended narrative. If you want a comparison, think of Prince of the late 1980s—an artist making eccentric music that still connects.

**SOUL ASYLUM** *Delayed Reaction*

Three decades on, and Soul Asylum does more than just soldier on throughout their first album in six years. Instead, Dave Pirner and the boys craft a tight, 10-song set. It's the kind of straightforward rock 'n' roll album of the ilk you don't hear all that often anymore. The album charges out of the gate with "Gravity," a tune that wouldn't have sounded out of place on *While You Were Out* or *And the Horse They Rode In On*. Pirner still has his punk-tinged snarl, but the years have tempered it a bit. That gives the quieter moments some extra, well, gravity. Meanwhile, Dan Murphy's guitar playing is as stinging as ever, while Tommy Stinson and Michael Bland keep the whole affair tight.

**MARINA AND THE DIAMONDS** *Electra Heart*

Welsh-born Marina Diamandis slots in nicely with the likes of Adele or Florence Welch, but with plenty of differences to set her apart from her British kin. Part of it here is that Diamandis produces an old-school concept album, centered on the titular character. It's a person who embraces all the shallow impulses of the American dream, made clear in album opener "Bubblegum Bitch." As the album deepens, so does Electra's journey, brought to life with a string of compelling tunes on the album's back half, ending with the appropriately titled "Fear and Loathing." The music embraces several decades of electronic, pop, and rock music, but with enough warmth that it never sounds dated or mechanical. It's easy to just listen to this for the songs, but the story makes this worth plenty of listens.

**DIRTY PROJECTORS** *Swing Lo Magellan*

One of the fine benefits of the fracturing of the music business is that it allows an act as eccentric as the Dirty Projectors to nearly break the top 20 on the Billboard album charts. Following up 2009's *Bitte Orca*, the Projectors are just the latest in a long line of artists willing to deconstruct traditional rock and pop music and recraft it in a fresh context. Songs meander along, sometimes not finding their focus until deep in the running time. It all pays off, however, through the skills of singer/songwriter David Longstreth and the balance of the band who provide compelling aural hooks to keep the listener's attention, no matter what direction the music takes on tracks like list single "Gun Has No Trigger" or "Unto Caesar."

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SATURDAY, September 1
Bayfront Pride Festival

SUNDAY, September 2
Pride Parade • Fruit Float
FooFoo Choo Choo



WWW.DSPRIDE.COM



DULUTH-SUPERIOR PRIDE: Not Your Typical Small Town Pride

DULUTH-SUPERIOR Pride is not your typical small town Pride, according to DS Committee co-chair Bradford Folta. Lovingly nicknamed “Harbor Fairies,” over 10,000 proud GLBT people are estimated to swarm Duluth’s Bayfront Park this Labor Day weekend. With a strong GLBT community living in Duluth, and the countless visitors from across the country, Folta says, “The gays take over. It is literally gay central.”

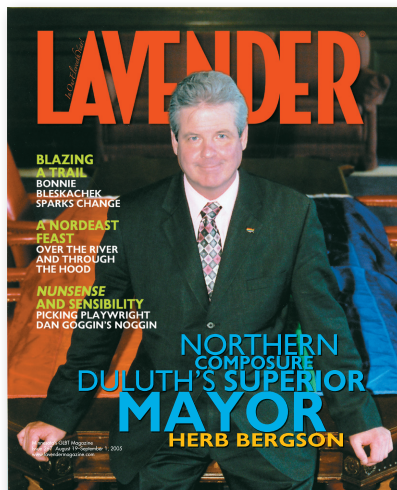
One unique aspect about DS Pride is that the festival is completely run by volunteers. Folta boasts, “People say it’s the best Pride they’ve been to that is put on by a nonprofit... No one gets paid. The headaches that we get through, the hair-pulling that we do behind the scenes, is all because we’re doing it out of love for everyone else. There’s no Pride for us except to make it better for others.”

Many local businesses, hotels, and bars are on board for the busy weekend. There are many options for lodging and dining in the Bay area. “Everyone loves it. Everyone wants to put on a good show. Everyone just wants to work together to make it great.”

With events like the FooFoo ChooChoo, the Fruit Float, and the Bar-B-Queer, there are plenty of unique experiences to be had. Folta suggests visiting the Pride in the Park festival on Saturday, watching the parade down Tower Ave in Superior on Sunday, and then choosing to either ride the FooFoo ChooChoo or go on the Fruit Float on Sunday. (There are still a handful of tickets available for purchase at the dock.)

The party definitely doesn’t stop after the festival; Folta notes that everyone goes to the bars after the special events for block parties. Notable gay bars in the area include the Main Club and the Flame Club in Superior, and (as of July 30), the Flame Club Duluth is now open in Canal Park. The Flame Club Duluth is the first openly gay owned and operated nightclub in Duluth.

Folta describes the atmosphere of DS Pride as amazing. “Duluth-Superior in itself is one of those bay cities where being gay is



okay. There are a lot more supporters than everyone believes. That’s the beauty of Duluth. It’s such a progressive town.”

Duluth’s political leaders are notably progressive, from Mayor Don Ness who openly supports and advocates for the GLBT community to former Mayor Herb Bergson. As an outspoken ally for the GLBT communities of Duluth and Superior, Bergson openly thanked the GLBT community for their charity and AIDS awareness work in 2005. He also was very aware of the economic and cultural benefits of being a welcoming community. Lavender Magazine featured Bergson on a cover in 2005, noting his strong support for the GLBT community. Bergson’s official portrait, which includes a pink triangle at his request, will be unveiled at this year’s DS Pride.

Folta urges people to attend Duluth-Superior Pride, saying, “Don’t look at Duluth-Superior Pride as a small town Pride. It’s not. It’s huge, and there’s way more to do. People have been coming to it for years and still haven’t done everything...Everyone who goes has seen it and loves it.” ■

DULUTH-SUPERIOR PRIDE EVENTS

Thursday, August 30

Mayor’s Reception

5pm
The Depot, 506 W Michigan
St, Duluth

Friday, August 31

Poetry Reading

5pm – 7pm
Jitters Coffee House, 102 W
Superior St, Duluth

Jazz Night

8:30 pm
Carmody Irish Pub, 308 E
Superior St. Duluth, MN

Bonfire on the Point

Sunset
Wisconsin Point, WI

Saturday, September 1

Hummingbird Family 5K

8:30am Registration/9:00am
Start

Western Lake Superior Wa-
terfront Trail, Duluth

Bayfront Pride Festival 2012

11-7
Bayfront Park, Duluth

Bar-B-Queer

7-11pm
Hosted at the home of Alvin
Berg and Vince Nelson

Sunday, September 2nd

Worship Service and Brunch

8:30-10am Brunch, Service
at 10:00

Unitarian Universalist Con-
gregation of Duluth

835 West College Street,
Duluth

Pride Parade

12:00pm
Tower Ave, Superior

Fruit Float

3:30 Boards, 3:45 Departs

The FooFoo ChooChoo

3:30pm
Departs from Depot Area

Main Club Drag Show

9:30 pm
1217 Tower Ave, Superior

For more information, visit
www.dspride.com.

Eileen Scallen

Q&A with Eileen A. Scallen, Professor of Law, William Mitchell College of Law

“We serve the law. We teach it, study it, practice it, and work to make it just. This is our mission.” – Mission Statement of William Mitchell College of Law

Could you explain the mission of William Mitchell College of Law?

When I was asked to help draft a mission statement for William Mitchell several years ago, I was dubious about the practical value of a statement. But I was wrong. In adopting the mission statement, our Faculty and Board of Trustees committed the College to serving the law. We vowed to be leaders – through our teaching, our scholarship, and our public service. When we promised to work to make the law “just,” we deliberately chose not to limit ourselves to one political, religious, economic, or philosophical definition of “justice” because our Faculty, Board, staff and students represent a diverse range of guiding backgrounds and values. We believe that this diversity strengthens us at William Mitchell. We are united in our goal to make the law more just, while accepting that – because of our diversity – we may sometimes disagree about what “justice” means. We think that makes a stronger law school and better public servants and leaders.

Why did William Mitchell Faculty decide to come out in public opposition to the amendment that would limit the freedom to marry for same-sex couples in Minnesota?

Our position reflects a few principles. First, the proposed amendment directly affects people who study and work at William Mitchell, undermining the school’s policy of nondiscrimination, and damaging our ability

to be the excellent law school we are. Second, we pointed to the mission stating that we serve the law – in teaching and studying about law. We promised we would, as an institution, “work to make [the law] just.” We pointed out that this proposed amendment was unjust under any definition of the term because it uses a popular, majority vote to restrict the rights of a specific and historically unpopular minority. The proposed amendment uses a popular vote to short-circuit the ability of the legislative and judicial branches to use their separate and independent constitutional powers address or remedy inequality. We argued that if ever a Faculty of Law was called upon to teach and serve the law, it is now. We needed to stand up publically and expose the sole legal consequence of this proposed amendment – to single out and deny people the freedom to marry someday merely because they are LGBT. I think our Faculty came out in public opposition to the proposed amendment because to do so was true to our mission.

What is the significance of a “Faculty” resolution?

William Mitchell is a great law school not merely because it has collected terrific individuals to teach there, but because together we are greater than the sum of us. Most of us have spoken against the proposed amendments as individuals (and will continue to do so), but our individual voices do not have the force of the voice of the Faculty of the William Mitchell College of Law. Because of this, we agreed that we should use the power to speak as a Faculty only rarely and in the clearest cases within our mission, where the problem directly affects the Faculty’s



immediate interests. Speaking against this proposed amendment is one of those cases.

Putting aside its particular mission as a law school, how would the amendment affect William Mitchell’s immediate interests?

Like other law schools, William Mitchell’s Faculty is always looking for the most talented students, skilled employees, and passionate workers. We are seeing more competition for qualified students because students are concerned about the health of the economy in general, and the legal profession specifically. Given the qualifications we require, our prospective students, faculty and staff, frequently have choices about where they can study or work. This amendment would alienate many prospective students and employees, making it more difficult to attract and retain the most qualified people. □

"REMEMBER ALWAYS THAT YOU ARE WHOLE AND YOU ARE BEAUTIFUL IF YOU
REMEMBER THIS AT ALL TIMES NOTHING WILL BREAK YOU DOWN." --NADALE

STUDENT SURVIVAL GUIDE & RESOURCES



← MINNEAPOLIS

by
Kathleen Watson
and Andy Lien
Illustrations by
Austin Lindstrom
via Draw Something

School's in session! Whether you're returning after a relaxing summer or coming to the Twin Cities for your first year of college, *Lavender Magazine* has all the details on how to make your college experience absolutely fabulous. We've chosen some of the top places around each campus, thrown in some helpful resources for GLBT issues, and even grabbed some tips from *Lavender* student and alumni readers. Use this guide for Fast Facts on Gender and to get the inside scoop on the DOs and DON'Ts of joining new GLBT communities. We used Interstate 94 as a visual metaphor for this guide to hot spots near local campuses because all the schools are accessible via I-94. Don't let the visuals fool you, though. Like all the best things in life, I-94 is anything but straight...

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"MY SCHOOL'S GENDER AND SEXUALITY ALLIANCE (GSA) HAS BEEN VERY IMPORTANT TO ME. IT WAS THE FIRST COMMUNITY OF LGBT PEOPLE AND ALLIES THAT I WAS EVER A PART OF, AND IT IMMEDIATELY MADE ME FEEL AT HOME."--LYDIA

U of St. Thomas

St. Mary's U

MCAD

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94



ST. PAUL →

BUTCHER & THE BOAR

MCTC

Downtown Minneapolis as a campus has many locations for students to eat, socialize, and caffeinate. New or notable are the Lunds grocery store, Butcher & the Boar (mural by Adam Turman), and Eli's, all on Hennepin Avenue. Photos by Mike Hnida

U of M West Bank

BONESHAKER BOOKS

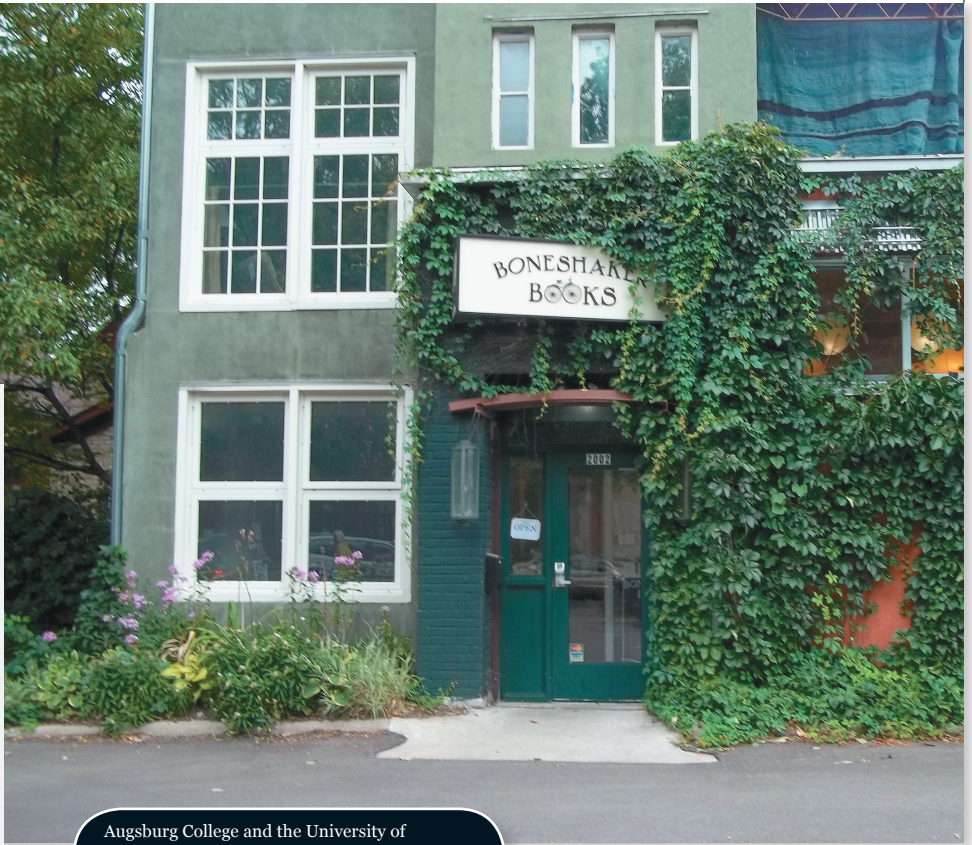
Gender neutral pronouns are being used more often, especially in academic environments, in order to avoid making binaristic assumptions about a person's gender identity. Though you can sometimes figure out what someone's preferred pronouns are by simply listening to how they or others refer to themselves, it's always best to respectfully ask someone's preferred pronoun if you are unsure.

Commonly used gender neutral pronouns are "ze/hir" and "they/them."

Sentence with gendered pronouns: I saw him/her at the store, and he/she looked happy.

Sentence using ze/hir: I saw hir at the store, and ze looked happy.

Sentence using singular they/them: I saw them at the store, and they looked happy. Some campuses have gender neutral bathrooms that everyone can use. Gender neutral bathrooms are important because they are available to everyone, regardless of gender identity. Many people with gender identities that are not exclusively male or female face discrimination and discomfort when having to choose gendered bathrooms. -K.W.



Augsburg College and the University of Minnesota's West Bank share some great Minneapolis neighborhoods: Cedar-Riverside and Seward. Cafes, bars, performance venues, books, antiques, and flavorful food destinations make this artistic and gritty area swarm. Photos by Kathleen Watson

Riverside Ave
Cedar Ave
SEWARD CAFÉ



CEDAR CULTURAL CENTER



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U of M Dinkytown

"Live it to the fullest. Be open minded. Be ready to discover who you truly are. Take advantage of new opportunities. Sometimes you might become overwhelmed with school work and plus managing with your personal life and adapting to going back to school, especially if it's a new school, but stay strong and know that you are able to deal with whatever life tosses you, and in order to deal with those hard moments you have to try and find your niche, where you can find people to talk to and express yourself, as well as create bonds that will give you strength when you most need it."-Monica



Not too far apart, yet very distinct, are the U of M Dinkytown, the St. Paul Campus of the U of M, and Luther Seminary--Minneapolis to St. Paul's St. Anthony Park, without a river in-between. Look for bustling in Dinkytown, escape to quiet in St. Anthony Park.
Photos by Mike Hnida



Luther Seminary



MUFFALETTA



Hamline U

U of M
St. Paul Campus

ST. PAUL



Sort of set off by itself on the edge of St. Paul and Roseville is Hamline. It's close to Como, which is close to St. Anthony Park, but it's also adjacent to Midway, where I-94 is found. It's got urban to one side and parks and rec to the other...not to mention Como Zoo.
Photos by Mike Hnida



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Minneapolis Movie Bears, TCGMC

DOs and DON'Ts

DON'T feel forced to come out if you aren't ready or don't feel safe.

DON'T "out" others. Every person has the right to come out in their own time in a safe environment.

DON'T use gendered speech when you are not sure.

DO remain conscious of preferred names and preferred pronouns. If you make a mistake, apologize and correct yourself.

DO become an ally and advocate for the GLBT community.

DO interrupt homophobic/biphobic/transphobic jokes or remarks. Let people know you will not tolerate offensive and derogatory jokes.

DO become involved in your school's GLBT organizations. It's a great way to get connected and form a support network.
-K.W.



The colleges and universities south of I-94 are spread out between and around the neighborhoods of Merriam Park, Mac-Groveland, and Highland Park. Some of the destinations are a bit of a hike, but worth the trip. Know your bus routes and you'll own the town.
Photos by Mike Hnida



← MINNEAPOLIS



U of St. Thomas





St. Catherine U

Coffee makes the student's world go 'round. It's all about finding your source, keeping hooked up, and exploiting the Wifi at times. Luckily, St. Paul knows this and there's a coffee shop a stone's throw from wherever you are. Find the one that suits your style and settle in.
Photos by Mike Hnida

Macalester Coll



ST. PAUL

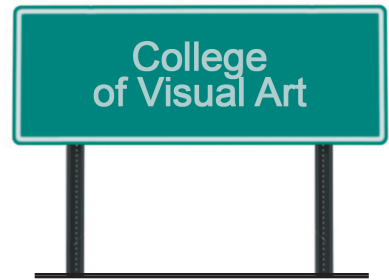
"BE YOURSELF. MOST IF NOT ALL MY FRIENDS I MADE IN COLLEGE DID NOT CARE THAT I WAS GAY. I SPECIFICALLY REMEMBER THE FIRST DAY OF MY FIRST YEAR, ONE OF MY FRIENDS (WHO I AM STILL FRIENDS WITH TO THIS DAY) SAID 'I'VE ALWAYS WANTED A GAY BEST FRIEND, WILL YOU BE MY GAY BEST FRIEND?' AND, I SAID OF COURSE."

-KEVIN





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IF THERE'S A STUDENT GROUP YOU'RE CURIOUS ABOUT, GO TO A MEETING! IF YOU'RE NOT INTO IT, THAT'S COOL. YOU AT LEAST TRIED IT ONCE." --AMBER



Cathedral Hill and the Summit-University Neighborhood display some of the most historic homes and establishments in St. Paul. Superb ambience and fine dining, cocktails, desserts, and shopping make Victoria Crossing and Grand Avenue must-stops for any student. Photos by Mike Hnida



CAFE LATTE



William Mitchell Coll of Law

Saint Paul College

NINA'S

"I've actually found a lot of really great tumblr blogs that are a great source of information, humor, and support for a huge variety identities on the LGBTQIA spectrum, as well as other fabulous founts of awesome. A couple of my favorites are fuckyeahbisexuals for my bi pride, cognitive dissonance for intelligent and sassy takes and take downs with regard to race, gender, and feminist theory especially in current events, and various Neil Patrick Harris & David Burtka blogs for my heartwarming pictures of America's gay sweethearts." -Hannah



Concordia Ave
Hamline Ave

94

ST. PAUL

Concordia U

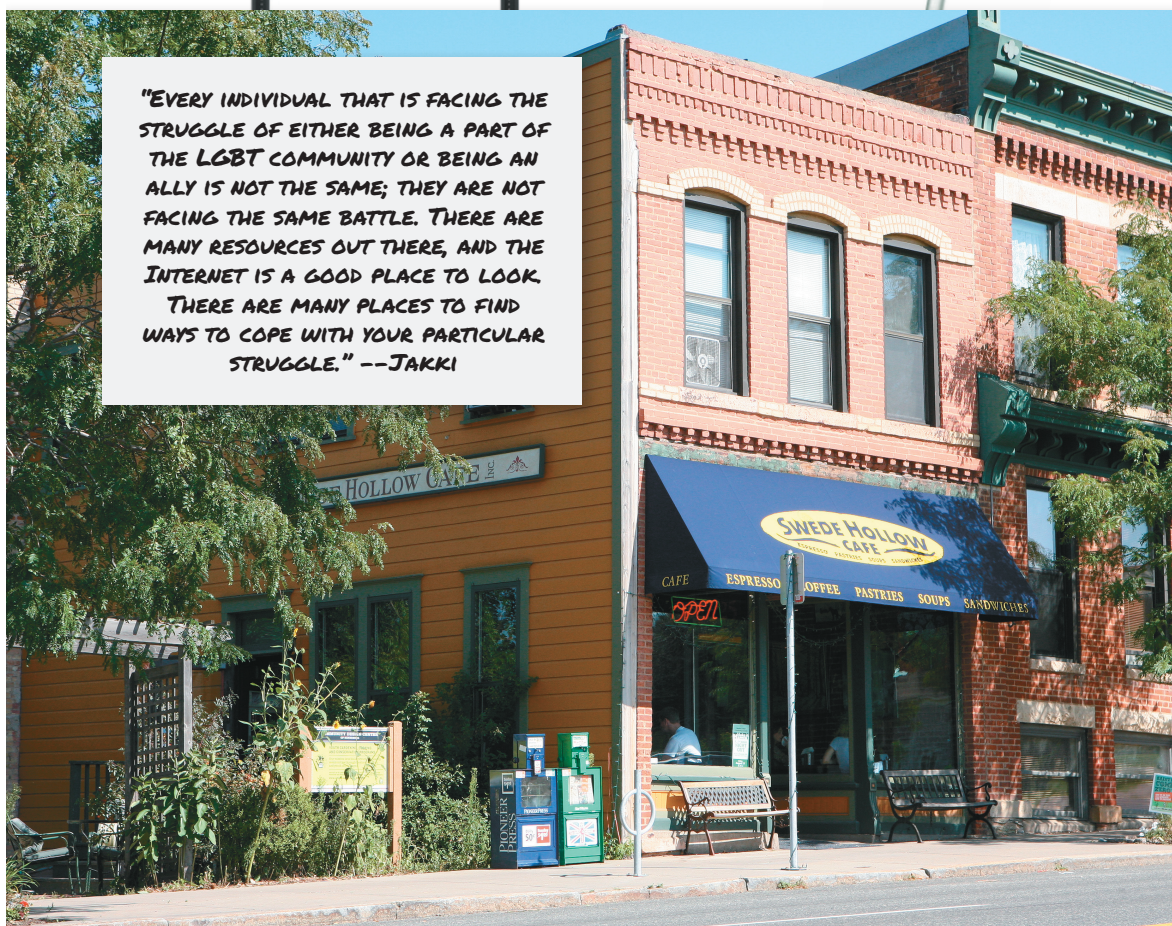
Bethel U

Though the Midway neighborhood was mentioned with regard to Hamline, that it's centrally located along I-94 in and amongst all the schools can't be understated. And, you'll find that all roads tend to lead to the Midway Target. Photo by Mike Hnida

*Editor's Note: One important piece to mention when attempting to put forth an inclusive list of colleges and universities in the Twin Cities is that not all campuses openly welcome GLBT students, but GLBT students can be found on all campuses in the Twin Cities. Please see the resources on page 36 and refer to the Survival Tips found throughout if you find yourself in an unsupportive environment. Seek support; you'll find it.

Metro State

"EVERY INDIVIDUAL THAT IS FACING THE STRUGGLE OF EITHER BEING A PART OF THE LGBT COMMUNITY OR BEING AN ALLY IS NOT THE SAME; THEY ARE NOT FACING THE SAME BATTLE. THERE ARE MANY RESOURCES OUT THERE, AND THE INTERNET IS A GOOD PLACE TO LOOK. THERE ARE MANY PLACES TO FIND WAYS TO COPE WITH YOUR PARTICULAR STRUGGLE." --JAKKI



Health Clinics

Red Door Clinic
HIV/STD testing services
(612) 543-5555
www.reddoorclinic.org/

Family Tree Clinic
Sexual health care for GLBT people
(651) 645-0478
www.familytreeclinic.org

Planned Parenthood
Sexual health care, birth control
(866) 411 8736
www.plannedparenthood.org/mn-nd-sd/

GLBT Support Services
Trans Youth Support Network (TYSN)
Support and community building for trans* youth
(612) 208-9762
www.transyouthsupport-network.org

The Trevor Project
Suicide prevention and crisis intervention services for GLBT youth
(866) 488-7386
www.thetrevorproject.org

GLBT in Recovery
Recovery support services, 12-step programs
(952) 922-0880
www.glbtinrecovery.com

Rainbow Health Initiative
Health and Wellness programming for GLBT community
(612) 206-3180
www.rainbowhealth.org

Other GLBT Resources
Quatrefoil Library
GLBT books, movies, magazines, and more
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www.quatrefoillibrary.org

Jean-Nickolaus Tretter Collection
GLBT historical artifacts at the U of M Library (special collection)
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www.lib.umn.edu/scr/bm/tretter

MISSISSIPPI RIVER

Overlooking Downtown St. Paul is Dayton's Bluff, where Metropolitan State University can be found. Views of the Capitol, the Cathedral, the Xcel Energy Center, the River, and all sorts of sites and attractions are within eyeshot--all for the exploring student's delight. Photos by Mike Hnida

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Campus Eats

That's right ladies and gentlemen; school is back in session. To help beat the back to school blues, we're bringing you some of the best bites you'll find around our area colleges. Whether you're looking for a place to impress the parents when they're dropping by for a visit, or to incite smooches from that fine-looking lad or lass that sits across the way from you in class, these are the kind of places that are exactly what the professor ordered; or something like that.

128 Café:

Right across from St. Thomas is food fantastic favorite, 128 Café. If you're looking for a top quality meal, you'd be remiss to not hit up the 128. Known for their legendary baby back ribs, they also feature a wide variety of other seasonal gems. Entrees range from \$15-\$30, and a little birdy told us that you can use your St. Thomas eXpress card there.

Campus: St. Thomas University – St. Paul

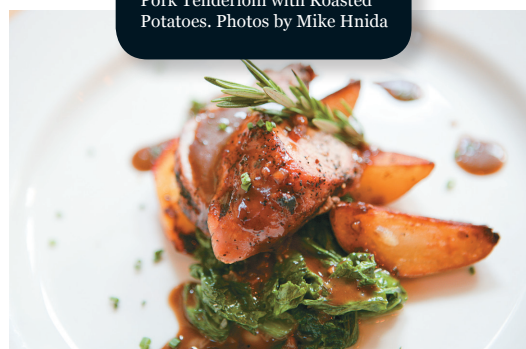
128 Cleveland Ave North

St. Paul

(651) 645-4128



(Above) BBQ Baby Back Ribs;
Pork Tenderloin with Roasted
Potatoes. Photos by Mike Hnida



The Strip Club:

Sounds hot right? Whereas this is another place that appears to be focused on meat, I assure you, they've got a lot more. In addition to the classic meat and fish options, The Strip Club Meat & Fish proudly displays a large selection of clever, yet sophisticated, small plates. Sit down and order a spread for you and your posse. Also, be sure to order a drink or two from the cocktail wizards behind the counter. You'll be sad if you don't. Small plates range from \$3.50 – \$10.50 and entrees run from \$22 – \$39.

Campus: Metropolitan State University – St. Paul

378 Maria Avenue

St. Paul

(651) 793-6247



Lake Country Fish and Chips.
Photo by Hubert Bonnet



10:34 a.m.

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Campus Eats

Kafe 421:

A Mediterranean-inspired bistro, Kafe 421 offers up a variety of dishes with European flair, like their lamb burger or vegetarian Moussaka. Kafe 421 has a variety of both domestic and imported beers along with wines by the bottle and the glass. If you're looking for the cute little dinner spot, with killer happy hour/cheap date night options, Kafe 421 is calling out your name.

Campus: University of Minnesota – Dinkytown

421 14th Avenue SE

Minneapolis

(612) 623-4900

Photo courtesy of Kafé 421

Butcher & the Boar:

This newly opened meat and bourbon centric bar and restaurant is located just on the fringe of downtown and is perfect for an evening filled with carnal delights. Enjoy delicious bourbon based cocktails on the fabulous outdoor patio, or hunker down over a giant piece of meat, like the \$9 footlong hot dog. The nice thing about B&B is that most of the plates are designed to share. Who doesn't want to sit down and pass around a giant sausage platter with a few friends? Plates average \$18-\$40.

Campuses: MCTC, St. Mary's University, University of St. Thomas, Dunwoody Institute – Downtown

1121 Hennepin Ave.

Minneapolis

(612) 238-8888



Photo by Mike Hnida

Joan's in the Park:

There's nothing like the taste of modern American cuisine to help wind down after a long week's worth of paper writing and keg stands. If you're in the Macalester or St. Kate's part of town, you might want to consider dropping by Joan's in the Park for wine and classic steakhouse fare; this one's for all you sophisticated folks out there. Entrees run \$18-\$31, yet there are a variety of appetizers and pizzas for less dough. **Campus: Macalester College, St. Catherine University, William Mitchell College of Law – St. Paul**

631 Snelling Ave S.

St. Paul

(651) 690-3297



Photo by Andy Lien



NEWSY BITS

Our favorite food truck rocking ladies have announced that they're opening a restaurant. Carrie Summer and Lisa Carlson will open a Chef Shack restaurant in Bay City, Wisconsin. It will be a "weekend only" destination. We can't wait!

Coffee News Café has closed unexpectedly. The restaurant just off the Macalester campus had finally updated their menu, added a website (finally stopped using MySpace), and had a Twitter handle. Things were looking up, and now they've closed their doors.

Primebar is up and running in Calhoun Square. The menu is filled with of-the-moment food items like sliders, duck confit, and pork belly. We'll see if they can make in the space that was once Figlio.

Colossal Café is now serving dinner at their St. Paul location. After wooing the former sous chef from Heartland to the location, the initial menu includes burgers, pastas, and a chicken liver pate that is not to be missed. They are also serving beer and wine, a great addition to the neighborhood and walking distance from the Luther Campus.

-Joy Summers

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SLICE | Joy Summers

Campus Coffee

Any college class scheduled before 8:00 am is a special form of early adulthood torture. Being expected to not only be in that seat, but with the brain fully functioning, isn't an easy transition. By night there are new social worlds to navigate, groups to join, huge ideas to be thought up—how can one be expected to then turn around and seriously retain even more knowledge? The answer is caffeine, my friend. Here's a roundup of some coffeehouses where you can camp out, get some work done, discuss those big ideas, and get that badly needed java jolt.

MCTC:

Espresso Royale is at the edge of their campus (There are also locations in Dinkytown and by St. Kate's). The back area has plenty of space to sprawl, while the front is perfect for chatting. 1229 Hennepin Ave, Minneapolis

University of Minnesota:

It's hard not to end up at the **Purple Onion**; they've become a U of M institution. 1301 South-east University, Minneapolis

Hamline:

Ginkgo is part kitschy shop part coffee house and everything a student could ask for in a home-base java joint. (Also great for St. Paul U of M students—just drive down and through the State Fair grounds!) 321 Snelling Ave, St. Paul

St. Thomas:

Kopplin's is recognized by many coffee aficionados as the best brew in the cities, and lucky for Tommies, it's walking distance from campus. 2038 Marshall Ave. St. Paul

St. Catherine's:

Quixotic Coffee pours a serious cup of coffee and a room that's a welcome mix of comfort and sophistication. 769 Cleveland, St. Paul

Macalester:

It's all about the original **Dunn Bros** on Grand and Snelling with music six nights a week and crowd that takes their brew seriously. 1569 Grand Ave, St. Paul



(Above) Espresso Royale; Purple Onion; Kopplin's; (Below) Dunn Bros. Photos by Mike Hnida




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BACK TO SCHOOL

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by Andy Lien



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BACK TO SCHOOL

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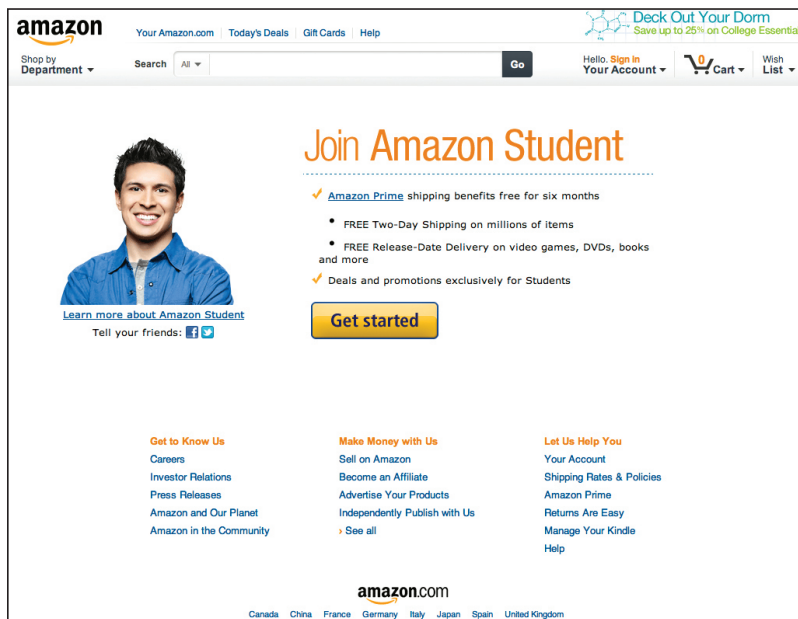


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LEARNING FOR LIFE:

NON-TRADITIONAL SCHOOLING OPPORTUNITIES

WHEN PEOPLE hear the word “college,” most envision a young, fresh-faced high school graduate strolling around campus with books in hand, eager to be exposed to the world of academia. Little attention is given to other learners—people enrolled in online programs, graduate level programs, or other continuing education programs. But, these programs are more popular than you would think and should not simply be brushed aside as less important than traditional 4-year college experiences. Whether you’re looking to start school for the first time as an adult learner, are going back after several years of real world experience, or are continuing in a specialty program tailored to your field, a bit of research and careful planning will help you feel like the big man on campus.

There are many different programs in the Twin Cities that are specifically tailored to particular groups of students. For people who don’t want or need a campus experience, Capella University offers online bachelor’s, master’s, MBA, and doctoral degrees. William Mitchell College of Law allows students to get the legal education and

real-life training they need to be successful lawyers. The University of Minnesota’s College of Continuing Education offers courses for adult learners who don’t necessarily need another degree but want to continue their education, and the U of M Law School allow students to pursue their legal education.

When searching for the best online school for you, Michael Walsh, Senior Manager of Public Relations at Capella University, notes that “All online universities are not created equally. Just like brick-and-mortar universities, online universities are all unique in their own way. Make sure you research the schools carefully to be sure they have the right program for you, have a strong community of support, and will empower you to achieve your educational goals.” Walsh encourages students to recognize their individual learning styles and choose a school that fits your lifestyle and learning style.

Because Capella is an online institution, there aren’t opportunities for campus community building like other schools. Though there aren’t specific GLBT support resources offered, Walsh states that

“Capella is a very inclusive institution and values and supports our students regardless of their sexual orientation.” Capella’s online Career Center includes a resource titled, “Job Search Considerations for Individuals who Identify as LGBT.” One benefit, however, of an online institution is that “students don’t often feel the need to highlight aspects of their personal lives, such as their sexual orientation,” according to Walsh. This allows students to be judged on their ideas and contributions instead of their different backgrounds.

Walsh recognizes that “flexibility is a must” for Capella students because 75% of Capella students are enrolled in master’s or doctoral programs, and the average student is 40 years old. Walsh states, “Our students are people who have worked in the professional world, and truly know the value and importance of a high-quality education, and they demand an education that will directly apply to the workplace and enable them to succeed and advance professionally. Capella prides itself on carefully designing our courses and programs to align with the professional competencies that are needed in the most highly sought-after fields today.”

For people considering law school, Steve Linders, the Assistant Director of Marketing at William Mitchell College of Law, suggests that people “treat the decision to attend law school as a major life decision and purchase.” Because law school is a huge time and financial commitment, it’s important to find the best fit. Linders notes, “Not every law school will be right for every student. A law school should challenge a student and support him or her through a period of what will be tremendous intellectual and personal growth.”

William Mitchell strives to support its students through the very intense process of law school. Linders says, “We work very hard to support students who face life’s unexpected challenges—illness, family emergencies, job loss. Mitchell has a reputation for doing whatever it can to help all students succeed.” William Mitchell also is very supportive of the GLBT community, with the full-time faculty recently passing a resolution opposing the anti-marriage amendment and a continual presence at Pride.

Finally, William Mitchell provides practical legal education that has produced many successful people. Linders notes, “Mitchell was a pioneer in practical legal education long before it was fashionable. It’s a school that offers students opportunities to gain hands-on, real-world experience and see firsthand the positive and lasting impact a lawyer’s work can have on others and communities. We also have a long, rich history of helping people from all backgrounds reach their goals: United States Chief Justice Warren Burger went to Mitchell. So did the first woman appointed to the Minnesota Supreme Court, the first Hmong lawyer in the United States, and Susan Allen, the first openly lesbian American Indian in any state legislature in the country.”

The U of M’s College of Continuing Education program is unique because not only does it include programming for adults who are going back to school to complete a degree or career-related program, but it provides opportunities for lifelong learning, even when diplomas and degrees aren’t the main goal. Janet Peltó, a Transfer Specialist, urges prospective students to “know what’s important to you in selecting a school,” and Susan Svatek (a Program Adviser)

adds that you should “understand your options at each school. Your past credits are still valid and can be used in new programs.” More importantly, though, Svatek says, “Know that you can do it; adults have a proven track record of success when coming back to school. Know that you have a lot to offer in the classroom, and faculty will welcome your presence.”

The College of Continuing Education understands the challenges of continuing education as an adult, and the college offers courses in evening and online formats. Students can also access all services by phone or Skype appointments if they are unable to schedule an in-person meeting. Svatek observes, “Adult students’ needs include balancing work and family, overcoming past academic difficulties, finding their place within college life, and financial concerns. The U’s College of Continuing Education has a long history of working with returning adult students to help them access the U’s diverse academic resources.”

Going back to school may seem overwhelming, but Peltó suggests that students start with just one class to see what the atmosphere is like and how school can be added into a busy schedule. Doing so allows you to focus on the course at hand, and that focus may be beneficial if you aren’t used to school. “If you start with one course, something that you are interested in, you may just be amazed at how well you do.”

The U of M’s Law School also welcomes non-traditional students, helping students navigate their education around child care, elder care, and partners. They even have a group called the Older and Wiser Law Students (OWLS) that provides support and information for non-traditional students. Noelle Noonan, who works in the Dean of Students Office, notes that students with more life experience also bring “invaluable experience and perspective into...the classroom and the law school as a whole,” according to Noonan. She continues, “Your experiences are helping to enrich the legal profession as a whole.”

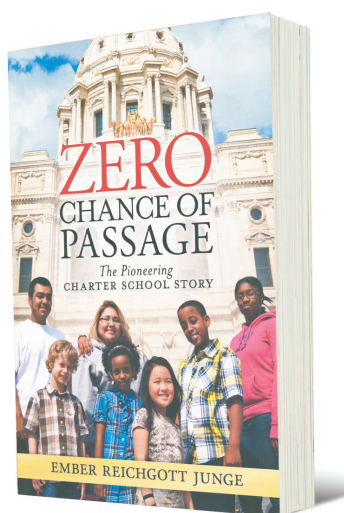
Though law school may seem daunting in your later years due to the intensity and expense of the program, older students may actually have an advantage due to their life experience. Noonan urges students to “Remember the long-term goal, when you are finished and have your degree, adding to your other skills. Employers are already looking for inherent skills like high EQ (emotional intelligence), self-awareness, and a high level of maturity. Later life students are generally higher and more experienced in those areas.”

Finally, the University of Minnesota provides GLBT support resources for all their students and the community with over 40 GLBT organizations and initiatives. Matthew Antonio Bosch, the GLBTA Programs Office director, says, “Whether you’re returning to finish a degree or starting your first, we create an atmosphere where students feel they can bring their whole selves, get connected, and be who they truly are, without fears of rejection or isolation.”

It’s never too late to finish your degree or start on your educational journey. As Janet Peltó states, “Remember that the things that make you a successful adult, such as being able to manage priorities, solve problems, and even ask questions, are the things that will make you a successful student. Adults who go back to school awaken in ways they never expected.” □

Chartered Schools

ZERO CHANCE OF PASSAGE: THE PIONEERING CHARTER SCHOOL STORY
Ember Reichgott Junge
 Beaver's Pond Press
 \$20



Define the phrase, “chartered school.” You’re unsure? You have no idea?

According to Ember Reichgott Junge who spoke with *Lavender* recently about her new book, *Zero Chance of Passage: The Pioneering Charter School Story*, “A chartered school is an independent public school created by teachers and parents to provide new and innovative opportunities for learning that meet the needs of families and the community.”

The former Minnesota State Senator wrote her book to celebrate the twentieth anniversary of chartered schools in Minnesota—the first in the nation—and to gather the heretofore-fragmented history into a single, coherent narrative. Others, including then governor Rudy Perpich, Ray Budde, Ted Kolderie, and Al Shanker, helped pave the way for the landmark legislation, but Reichgott (she later married Michael Junge) authored the landmark legislation that passed in 1991, paving the way for Minnesota’s and the nation’s first charter schools.

A major motive for writing *Zero*, Reichgott Junge explained, was “the need to dispel myths about the origins of chartering.” To this end, she interviewed fifteen original supporters and opponents in 2011, whose diverse views complete this complex story. To her surprise, she discovered that “no one knew the whole story.” The book succeeds admirably in giving the reader both a comprehensive overview and a clear understanding of what chartered schools are—and are not.

Chartered schools are public schools, are open to all students, charge no tuition, and are non-sectarian and non-elitist. They are not to be confused with private schools, and they are not subsidized with school vouchers. “Chartering” is a verb,” she stresses, “and has to do with a process, not the real estate of a school building. Hundreds of ways to learn can be delivered in chartered schools.”

Reichgott Junge emphasized that the chartered school legislation was a bipartisan effort to revive public school education that arose “from outside the traditional political system.”

Accountability and performance are crucial to chartering. A school is chartered for an agreed period of time and is accountable for achieving declared aims within that period. If the school does not succeed, she explained, it can and will be closed.

Reichgott Junge shared a number of engaging personal lessons learned, revelations that make the book more intimate and readable.

One of the most important was, “Compromise is not defeat.” This was a difficult pill to swallow, she confessed, when the bill was passed in what she felt was a greatly diminished state. Later she realized that even so, it was, in fact, the kernel of today’s successful chartered schools. “Sometimes we have to celebrate the small victories,” she concluded.

The initial legislation mandated a cap of only eight schools, all having to be authorized by the local school district. Today there are 148 chartered schools in Minnesota, authorized in a number of different ways, while nationwide some two million students attend 5,600 chartered schools.

There is not space here to relate all the Byzantine intricacies of the creation of chartered schools, but Reichgott Junge makes the story compelling by weaving the reams of historical detail together with her own and the interviewees’ personal experiences, seen in the light of reflected time.

Reichgott Junge’s thoroughly researched and finely-detailed book can be read not only as a history of the struggle to create and pass charter school legislation, but also as a memoir, and, more broadly, a “handbook of lessons learned for achieving change that is difficult.” □



For more information on *Zero Chance of Passage: The Pioneering Charter School Story* and on chartered schools visit www.ZeroChanceOfPassage.com.

The Aliveness Project

In the United States today, HIV and AIDs are largely no longer seen as a death sentence. Many people experience HIV/AIDs as a manageable life-long or chronic illness. The key word is “manageable.” But AIDs, unfortunately, has not gone away, and there is no cure. The numbers of newly infected individuals continues to grow, especially among older adults, young males, and minority communities. This is coupled with a continuing decrease in funding supports, due largely to reduced sense of urgency.

Quick! By a show hands...how many readers have heard of, or are aware of, the work of The Aliveness Project?

Hmmmm. Just about what I thought—not as many hands raised as I had hoped. Well, let me fill you in.

Founded in 1985, The Aliveness Project provides a wide range of hot meals, food shelf, therapeutic, and other services to individuals living with HIV/AIDS. Each year, The Aliveness Project serves over 1,600 HIV-positive individuals and offers a wide array of services, including:

- Serves 34,000 meals in our dining room;
- Distributes 50 tons of nonperishable food and hygiene items;
- Provides 36,000 volunteer hours provided by 1,600 volunteers, the equivalent of 17 FTEs (Full Time Employees);
- Provides 2,400 case management visits to assist with employment, housing, medical care, and education concerns;
- Delivers 3,000 integrative therapy sessions—acupuncture, massage, and other wellness treatments; and
- Over 1,500,000 meals have been provided by The Aliveness Project’s Meal Program and Food Shelf since 1985.

ADDITIONALLY:

- 52% of individuals served were Caucasian (30% African American; 5% African-born; 1% Asian; 6% Latino; 4% Native American; 3% other);
- 72% of individuals served were within FPL and an additional 25% within 300%
- 44% with known risk factors identified as heterosexuals.
- 90% of members surveyed indicated that the services of The Aliveness Project assist them to live independently, avoiding a more

costly out-of-home placement.

- 74% of members (with a job) surveyed indicated that “these services make it possible for me to work”, and
- 78% of members (with a job) surveyed indicated that “these services help me keep working at my current job.”
- 90% of members surveyed indicated that the “food services help me stretch my financial resources.”

The Aliveness Project has grown substantially over the past decade and is currently working to move to a new home that will provide significantly more space for its services. **The Aliveness Project is currently involved in a capital campaign to raise funds for a new home.** I asked Joe Larson, Executive Director, to describe the capital campaign and the **current challenge grant** that is underway to help raise the needed funds for the new site.

“I am Tim, and I’m positive. I was 18 when I was diagnosed, and it was the end of my life as I knew it. I felt like a leper, and that was pretty awful. At The Aliveness Project everyone is so positive that it helped me to say, ‘OK, HIV is something I have to deal with, and I want what’s best for myself.’ “

Joe, tell us just a little bit about the current capital campaign.

Joe: In 2009, The Aliveness Project launched a \$2.5 million **capital campaign** for the purchase and renovation of a new home at Nicollet Avenue and 38th Street in South Minneapolis. This new facility will offer improved accessibility, a larger food shelf, a spacious dining room, more therapy rooms, and other features to better serve our HIV+ members and their families. So far we have raised \$1.1 million, so we are trying to wrap up the campaign this fall.

And, can you tell us about the **matching grant** that is currently offered to the Aliveness Project?

The **Otto Bremer Foundation** has generously committed a **\$200,000 Matching Grant**, so **every gift we received now will be matched** up to \$200,000 and allow us to start construction this year.

In fundraising, we know that no gift is too small or too big. If people would like to give to make a donation to the Aliveness Campaign, how would they do that?

A donor form for this matching grant can be found on our website at www.aliveness.org. To help us reach \$200,000, we are asking people to consider a significant contribution at this time. We will acknowledge all major gifts on the walls of our new building, including:

- **\$10,000: Name on THERAPY ROOM** (Corporate logo optional)
- **\$5,000: Name on plaque in LOBBY** (Corporate logo optional)
- **\$2,500: Name on plaque in DINING ROOM**
- **\$1,000: Name on plaque in COMMUNITY ROOM**
- **\$500: Name on plaque in MEMBER LOUNGE**
- **\$250: Name on tile in HALLWAY**
- **\$100: Name on brick in HALLWAY**

Gifts can be made in memory of loved ones or in honor of someone living with HIV/AIDS or other persons. This is a great way to create a living memory of those who have been part of our HIV community since the beginning of The Aliveness Project.

I am Hazel (pictured), and I’m positive. I love coming to The Aliveness Project. I can always come here and find people to visit with, talk to, and be here for me. I love being a volunteer. They’ve given me so much. I just want to give back. □

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1-USA

REI Endorses Marriage Equality

On Top Magazine reports that sporting goods and camping retailer Recreational Equipment Inc., REI, has endorsed gay marriage and in particular Referendum 74, the ballot question which will ask Washington state voters in November to either uphold or overturn a gay marriage law approved by lawmakers. REI President Sally Jewell said in a statement: "REI is taking a position in support of marriage equality – an issue that is important to the co-op as an inclusive organization and a welcoming place to work and do business". "Marriage equality is important to the co-op because the benefits, legal clarity and societal understanding that (my husband) Warren and I have enjoyed these past 34 years should be available to any two people who want to express their love and make a permanent commitment to each other that is so clearly provided for in the legal definition of marriage." The Kent-based retailer maintains 110 stores in about 30 states.

Eagle Scouts Return Medals

The Miami Herald reports that for a physician in Illinois and an attorney in Kentucky, Eagle Scout medals were treasured reminders of youthful achievement. Yet each is parting with his medal out of dismay over the Boy Scouts' recently reaffirmed policy of excluding gays. Dr. Robert Wise of Chicago wrote to Scout headquarters in Irving, Texas: "I can no longer maintain any connection to an organization which actively promotes such a bigoted and misguided policy." Wise, 59, is among dozens of former Eagle Scouts who have taken such steps following the July 17 announcement that the Boy Scouts of America, after a two-year review, were sticking with the long-standing policy of excluding openly gay youth and adults as members and leaders. Eagle Scout Zach Wahls, a 21-year-old activist raised by lesbian mothers in Iowa, has become a leader of the campaign against the membership policy, though he says he doesn't plan to return his own Eagle Scout medal. He said the best chance for change lies with local Scout councils, some of which have signaled their commitment to an inclusive approach that would accommodate gays.

Wisconsin

Paul Ryan on Gay Rights: "I Don't Know Why We Are Talking About This."

Huffington Post reports that Mitt Romney's running mate Paul Ryan once supported equal rights, but is behaving differently since voting against ending "don't ask, don't tell" in 2010. In 2011, Ryan backed a Wisconsin constitutional amendment to ban marriage equality in the state's constitution. When gay rights come up, Ryan tries to change the subject, accusing the media of focusing on a meaningless issue.

Virginia

With Promotion, U.S. Army Welcomes First Openly Gay General

The Los Angeles Times reports that Tammy Smith is getting promoted less than a year after the repeal of “don’t ask, don’t tell,” the policy that banned gays and lesbians from serving openly in the military. General Smith is the highest-ranking GLBT person to acknowledge her sexual orientation while serving. Smith’s wife Tracey Hepner is active in gay and lesbian rights.

Washington D.C.

Democrats Officially Include Gay Marriage Plank in Platform

The Washington Times reports that Democratic Party becomes the first to add a plank endorsing marriage equality. President Obama has yet to say he backs adding gay marriage in as part of his party's platform. Opponents of marriage equality are still able to say that voters of any state have yet to adopt gay marriage.

2-ZIMBABWE

Police Assault And Detain Gay Activists in Zimbabwe

All Africa reports that a team of about fifteen riot squad police, some of them visibly drunk, disrupted a meeting at the offices of the Gays and Lesbians of Zimbabwe (GALZ) on Saturday, assaulting and arresting a total of 44 members. Marufu Mandevere, from the Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights (ZLHR), told SW Radio Africa that the group had gathered for a workshop on the draft constitution and to launch their "Violations Report", detailing abuses against GALZ members and stated that "after the workshop they had a party and that is when police cordoned off their offices. They took almost everyone there to Harare Central Station and detained them without charge." A statement from GALZ said four policemen had attempted to gain access to the premises and called for riot squad backup when they failed, and said: "Police, some of them visibly drunk, assaulted most of the members using baton sticks, open hands and clenched fists before detaining them without charge". Homosexuality is illegal, according to Zimbabwean law. Amendments introduced by government in 2006 defined sodomy as any 'act involving contact between two males that would be regarded by a reasonable person as an indecent act'. The amendment also criminalized a simple show of affection such as holding hands, hugging or kissing. Gays and lesbians in Zimbabwe live in a culture that publicly discriminates and openly despises their sexuality.

3-GREAT BRITAIN

Ten Openly Gay Olympians Win Medals

On Top Magazine reports that ten openly gay Olympians won medals at the 2012 Summer Olympics in London. A majority of the medals won by out athletes competing in London are gold. The statistics were compiled by sports site SBNation.com, which wrote: "If Team Gay was a country, it would have finished 31st overall with seven medals, tied with Mexico, Ethiopia and Georgia. They would have beaten the medal count of such countries as Jamaica, Ireland, Argentina and India. They would have finished 21st overall for most golds (four), tied with Iran, Jamaica, Czech Republic and Korea."

4-RUSSIA

4 RUSSIA

St. Petersburg Lawmaker Says Madonna Broke Anti-Gay Law

The Moscow Times reports that a municipal legislator called for Madonna and concert organizers to be brought to justice saying that she violated a St. Petersburg's anti-gay propaganda law. Madonna said on stage "We want to fight for the right to be free, to be who we are. I've traveled the world a lot and seen that people are becoming more and more intolerant, but we can change that." Madonna called on fans to raise their arms and pink wristbands "to show your love and appreciation for the gay community."

5-JERUSALEM

Gay Travel Helps Boost Tourism in Israel

The Miami Herald reports that hundreds of thousands of tourists are flocking to Israel each month despite the region's turmoil.

Israel is enjoying an unexpected tourism boom with 2012 shaping up to be a record year featuring 300,000 tourists in July.

Tel Aviv was recently crowned by a gay group as the "Best Gay City of 2011," ahead of New York, Toronto and London.



Introducing: Chad Griffin, Human Rights Campaign President



Chad Griffin, new President of the Human Rights Campaign.
Photo courtesy of the Human Rights Campaign

The season is turning from summer to fall which signals that it's time for the 2012 Twin Cities Human Rights Campaign Gala Dinner. This year, the climate is more charged than ever in recent history with marriage equality on our minds and in our hearts. On September 8, members and guests of the Twin Cities HRC will gather at the Minneapolis Convention Center to raise money and celebrate the collective efforts of many, as well as hear from the new President of the Human Rights Campaign, Chad Griffin. Here is a short introduction to Chad as well as his inspiring advice for facing adversity and challenges of all types and scales.

Andy Lien: As the new leader of the Human Rights Campaign, your background is impressive. Can you highlight positions of interest to introduce yourself to the Lavender readers?

Chad Griffin: Serving as the President of the Human Rights Campaign is the greatest honor of my professional life, but I've always been dedicated to advocating for causes I believe to be right. I got my start working as a press aide in the Clinton White House. Later, after finishing school, I took a job working for a charitable foundation in California. It was there that I really cut my teeth on campaigns to increase funding for early childhood education and stem cell research.

In 2008, Proposition 8 changed all of our lives. I helped to set up

an organization to challenge Prop 8 in court, organizing folks from both major parties and all walks of life around a case that is currently sitting in the Supreme Court's docket. Now that I'm at the HRC, I sincerely believe that we—as a community and as citizens—have a chance to turn a corner in this fight for full equality.

AL: What are your goals as the new President of the HRC?

CG: I've always said that if I have one goal, it's to make sure that the next generation—today's LGBT youth—inherit a country in which their communities and their government embrace them for who they are. This means we have to secure full legal equality—from marriage equality, to an inclusive employment non-discrimination law at the federal level, to equality in health care and other rights. But it also means we must participate in a vital dialogue around the country and create change in institutions like workplaces and ➔

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churches that effect peoples' daily lives. At HRC, we do research and provide important resources for our places of worship, our families, our hospitals and our schools. We need to ensure that Americans are part of this conversation about how we treat and understand LGBT families and individuals in this country.

AL: You grew up in Arkansas and experienced a religiously conservative culture. Minnesota may be progressive, but it also has a similar strong conservative culture with systematic, ingrained prejudices. How did you cope with this as a younger person? What advice would you give students who are in this type of environment?

CG: As a young person growing up in small town Arkansas, it sometimes seemed like I didn't know a single other gay person. I understand how it feels to be isolated and to wonder what kind of future you'll be able to build for yourself. There are still too many bullies out there, and they're not just in our schools.



Photo by David Daniels

My advice to young people in these situations is that you are never alone. If HRC can be one thing, I hope that it's a beacon for LGBT youth—proof that there are advocates out there fighting for them across the country. There are other incredible organizations working on the state and local level as well. Seek them out because they want to help.

AL: What advice would you give parents with LGBT children in conservative communities?

CG: My chief piece of advice would be to make sure that your child feels affirmed and loved inside your home. The Family Acceptance Project at San Francisco State University has a number of great resources and publications for parents of LGBT children, as does our own HRC Foundation. If you feel

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Photo by Alyssa Schukar

that you lack the vocabulary to discuss these issues, seek out communities in your area that can help. It will make all the difference in the world for your child.

AL: The Minnesota ballot will have an amendment on it limiting the marriage to be between a man and a woman in November. What is your experience with similar such campaigns? What advice can you give us in this fight?

CG: We all remember the bitter disappointment of Proposition 8 in 2008 and the many other constitutional bans on marriage equality around the country. Any time that a discriminatory ballot measure is approved, it has repercussions for our communities and especially for our young people.

That's why HRC has just this month committed an additional \$1 million to the four states facing marriage-related ballot initiatives this year—Maryland, Maine, Washington, and Minnesota. We're optimistic that if we coordinate our efforts with the local campaigns on the ground, and if we speak clearly about the basic dignity of LGBT families, we'll have results to celebrate come November.

AL: We're excited to hear you speak at the 2012 HRC Gala Dinner in September. Have you been to the Twin Cities before and what are you looking forward to?

CG: I'm excited too! I love being able to speak directly with the individuals around the country who make this movement happen. This is my first time visiting as President of the HRC, and I know the planners have done a phenomenal job with the Dinner in past years. I can't wait to see what they've got up their sleeves. □

For more information about the 2012 Twin Cities HRC Gala Dinner, go to www.hrc.org/events/entry/hrc-twin-cities-gala-dinner



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Atons Celebrate 40 Years

THE ATONS of Minneapolis recently celebrated “40 Years of Devotion” in high Egyptian style at their Gopher XX run. In addition to celebrating a milestone anniversary, the Atons hosted a semi-annual meeting of the Mid-America Conference of Clubs (MACC), an organization that coordinates activities among member GLBT leather clubs.

The actual event took place Friday through Sunday, July 20-22, but many members of the Atons had been at the camp setting things up since the previous Tuesday. The amount of detail the club put into planning and presenting this run was staggering.

On Friday afternoon, the registration table was set up in a portion of the camp’s main lodge which had been turned into a breathtakingly elaborate simulation of an archeological dig. One entire cabin was turned into an ancient Egyptian burial chamber, the better to host an almost continuous series of cocktail parties. The ceiling of the chamber appeared to be held up by some impressive-looking columns that one Atons member just happened to have in his basement. (Or was it his garage?)

Friday night’s opening ceremonies featured an epic pageant drama (narrated by your humble columnist) about the three kingdoms of ancient Egypt, their panoply of gods, and how the pharaoh Akhenaten sought to replace them all with one god: the Aten, or sun god, from which the Atons take their name.

For the ceremony, members of the Atons wore elaborate headdresses, masks, and costumes as they portrayed some of the more notable ancient Egyptian gods. Then,

a mummified Aton (Kyle Truss), representing both the pharaoh Akhenaten and the sun god, was carried to the front of the ceremonial area and was cut out of his mummification wrappings. He was seated in a place of honor and surrounded by the other gods, who then removed their costumes and stood before the crowd as the modern-day Atons.

On Saturday morning, breakfast was followed by the MACC meeting, which was followed by games: horseshoes, where the horseshoes were clothes hangers and the post was a full-size Egyptian mummy that was losing its wrappings; a how-fast-can-you-piece-together-these-ancient-Egyptian-ruins jigsaw puzzle; a radio-controlled toy dune buggy drive through an obstacle course of obscene ancient Egyptian ruins, along with both male and female Sphinxes; and a large-size Pachinko game.

Lunch was, appropriately, mid-eastern gyros and pita, along with fine American sweet corn. The afternoon was leisurely, a perfect time for a nap in the hammock or a dip in the swimming pool that the Atons had installed for the weekend.

For Saturday evening’s banquet, the main lodge was turned into an Egyptian temple whose walls were decorated with embossed hieroglyphics. (Somebody had to measure the dimensions of the lodge, design the wall panel layout to fit those dimensions, design the inscriptions on the panels, fabricate and decorate the panels, haul them to the site and install them in the lodge. What did I say about how much planning was involved in this run?)

Banquet entertainment after dinner was

provided by Nina DiAngelo, from the Gay 90s show lounge, who performed first as Judy Garland and then as Liza Minnelli. Also after dinner, a surprise: In appreciation for his many years as a member and leader of the club, as well as for his leadership of the leather and GLBT communities, the Atons presented Sam Carlisle with a Leadership Award.

After the banquet, the Atons presented more entertainment: In a romp through the music of the decades of the Atons’ existence, six Atons members performed as the Village People in “YMCA,” did an exercise tableau to Olivia Newton-John’s “Physical,” shook their pompoms to “Mickey,” and, inevitably, had a go at the Go-Go’s “Walk Like an Egyptian.”

Sunday morning’s breakfast included the traditional awards and recognition ceremony. The award trophies were all Egyptian-themed, of course, and were some of the best-crafted awards I’ve ever seen presented at a run. Then another surprise: The Atons announced that they were making Angel Rodriguez, a former Atons member who has remained heavily involved with the club’s activities, an honorary full member of the club.

After 40 years, the Atons of Minneapolis are now one of the longest-running gay leather clubs. But more than that, they are now one of the oldest GLBT community organizations of any type. That’s something to celebrate. ▣



Envy

AT A Friday afternoon club gathering—something us older folks know as a *FAC*—I struck up a conversation with a very fit, short-haired woman. It turned out she was a therapist who works exclusively with 15 to 25-year-old GLBT youth.

“The most common issue I deal with is gender identity,” she said. “I can’t believe how many patients consider themselves transgender in one form or another.”

I asked why the surge. She answered, “The internet. They understand they’re not alone. It gives them confidence. They want to live as themselves. These ‘kids’ won’t put up with being in a closet.”

That’s great, I thought. The young ones have the smarts to be themselves before they get locked into something that doesn’t work for them—like a life in the wrong gender.

I have to confess that I felt a pang—oh, hell, it was way more than that—of envy. I didn’t start to transition until 2009, when I was 52 years old. Those now coming out as transgender have at least a thirty year head start compared to me. They’re wiser, smarter, and braver than I could have ever hoped to be.

The therapist’s report reminded me of what I’ve lost in terms of *chance*. The chance to live life as a younger woman, making my way in the world.

A few months ago, a friend and I dined at a restaurant where I pointed out a blonde tattooed server in a funky skirt.

“That’s who I’d look like if I had been a girl her age,” I said. “I wish I would’ve gotten the chance.”

Therein lies the rub. I’ve finally gotten to be *me*, the woman who always lurked inside.

The problem? I’m long past the wonderment of firsts—first love, first apartment, first child, even first dog. As a result, there’s a bit of loss mixed with the joy of womanhood.

Certainly, I’m thrilled to finally have what I call *clean lines*—the body of a woman. After all those years, my outside matches my inside. I’m thankful that I was able to arrive, so please, don’t get me wrong. I have immense gratitude.

On the other hand, when I see the beautiful twenty and thirty-year-old women who roam Minneapolis’s sidewalks and skyways, I bite my lip. *There’s another one I’ll never look like. Or date*, I say, to paraphrase a relatively famous comic.

A month ago, a barely thirty-year-old woman sat in my office. “Jane,” a complete stranger, had arranged for an informational interview. Within two minutes of meeting Jane, my knees went weak. She had blonde frizzy hair, an athlete’s body, and the smarts of a young Amelia Earhart. She made me laugh, and even listened attentively to my boring stories. My gaydar pinged wildly. I wanted to kiss her in the worst possible way. Thankfully, reason prevailed.

Yet, once again, the lost chance syndrome

surfaced. We struck it off like life-long pals. It made me think that, had I been even fifteen years younger, this woman would have gone for me, notwithstanding my prior history as a boy.

Sometimes, it doesn’t seem fair.

For most of you in the GLBT alphabet, what I write here resonates. Unless you came out in high school, to some extent the real you went on hold. Maybe that meant passing up the adorable boy in World Lit or the very athletic girl with delicious muscles in P.E. class. If so, now compound that by three decades, and you’ll understand where I’m coming from.

It’s not like I dismiss my prior life as a man. In male form, I had everything that anyone could ever want—a loving wife, the big house, a successful career, money in the bank, three cars in the garage. Yet, that was a man’s life. It worked for a while, but not for five decades.

Envy is so non-Buddhist. I’m quite Buddhist, meaning there’s a bit of dissonance here. I tell myself that I’m far wiser at 55 than I would have ever been at 25, and thus, I should be happy. It shouldn’t matter that I never got the thin, tight body of a twenty-something.

Most of the time, I accept this.

But not always. □

Ellie Krug welcomes your comments. You can email her at ellenkrug75@gmail.com.



Photos by Randy Stern



TOYOTA CAMRY

THIS IS the best-selling passenger car in the U.S.A.

If you are looking for a way to describe the Toyota Camry, this phrase is the most apt. It first took the title in 1997 and reached the top of the passenger car charts in the U.S.A. nine out of the past ten years. Nowadays, every Camry sold in this country is built here—deliveries are running 30,000-40,000 units a month.

Why has the Camry been so successful? For most of its life, the Camry represented the values of Middle America. It carried families, couples, employees, job seekers, and everyone else who needed a roomy sedan with plenty of power and good fuel economy. A Camry never inspired an enthusiast to carve a canyon road—unless you tweaked the SE model for optimal driving dynamics. Then again, no one envisioned it being the representative body shell for Toyota Racing Development's NASCAR Sprint Cup racer.

The Camry has a long history dating back to the day it replaced the out-of-touch-with-American-motoring-trends, rear-drive Toyota Corona. For 1983, the Camry was seen as an advance for Toyota—a proper transverse-mounted, front-drive sedan for families. Since then, the Camry became the bread-and-but-

ter for American motorists as a reliable, bulletproof, and inoffensive family conveyance.

My history with the Camry began with the second-generation model in 1987. I drove more than my share of them, finding the four-cylinder willing to do anything when the throttle was depressed. Braking, on the other hand, was an adventure.

With every generation of Camry, I always hoped for improvement. Bit-by-bit, they began to improve. The last Camry I actually enjoyed was a 2006 SE four-cylinder model. Any mid-sized sedan that can deliver 28MPG or more is awesome in my book. Not to mention, it was quite fun to drive—and rather nice to look at.

I should not throw a sledgehammer to the Camry just yet. I know plenty of friends who own them—my brother is on his second one. Yet, I continue to believe that Toyota will eventually create a Camry that would appeal to more than just those who buy them because of their history of bulletproof reliability and nothing more.

Perhaps this Camry will do the trick.

In its seventh iteration, the latest Camry is loaded with a new skin, a slightly tweaked chassis, more mechanical upgrades, and a better-configured interior. The reception for

the new Camry has been positive by consumers and pundits alike. The new model continues to sell at numbers that keep the Camry at the best-selling passenger car mantle.

Starting with its new skin, it reminded me of the Camry from the early-to-mid-2000s. However, every part of the body was tweaked with Toyota's latest design language fused with elements designed to accommodate American bodies of all sizes. From a distinctive, chromed front end to the "hockey stick" taillights, this Camry clearly sets itself apart with ambitions beyond being middle of the road. In all, it was a handsome silhouette.

Being this tester was the upmarket XLE, a few embellishments added to this top rung model. Some of them work well, such as the chrome trim on the rocker panels and the 17-inch alloy wheels. One thing that did not work well was the chrome strip across the trunk lid bridging the taillights. If you get the Hybrid version of the XLE, the Toyota logo stands out with black-and-blue inserts—unlike the regular four-cylinder and V6 XLE models.

Step inside into the XLE's optional leather interior, and you will be entertained with a twist on the old light gray color scheme. To compliment the woodgrain trim on parts of

the console and door armrests, a dark brown leather strip compliments the two-tone, light-to-medium gray hide on the seats. A dark gray finish was present on the top of the instrument panel. In all, the cabin felt comfortable, but it was rather functional as well.

Yet, that comfort is only as good as the feel inside the cabin. Toyota did a lot of work in making the Camry more engaging to the driver. There were plenty of switches within reach of the driver—including logical controls right on the steering wheel. Instrumentation was easy to read, though it would have been better if a proper temperature gauge supplanted the fuel economy gauge. Another suggestion would be to have the two small digital readouts for trip information and gear indication to have been better integrated with the rest of the instrument cluster.

Though the seats were big enough to accommodate many bodies, they had a few points to consider to the consumer. The front seats were comfortable, but not supportive with proper bolstering. Lumbar support helped the driver find the balance between comfort and support. The amount of seating space was extraordinary. Rear seat room was perfect for a full-sized North American sedan—big enough to accommodate everyone—at least two of everyone.

The Camry represented the first application of Toyota's new Entune infotainment suite. Though you get satellite navigation, SiriusXM satellite radio, HD Radio, and the usual audio options, there is an additional suite of applications available to utilize in the Camry. These apps include iHeartRadio, Pandora, Bing, MovieTickets.com, and Open Table—with more to come. To enable these apps, you must have an Internet connection via your mobile device. Secondly, these apps may not be suitable to use while you are in motion. If you chose not to use these apps and concentrate on your audio options, be prepared for a lovely sound from

six well-positioned speakers.

Most XLEs available at dealerships currently have the familiar 2.5litre dual overhead camshaft, four valve-per-cylinder, variable valve timing four-cylinder engine under the hood. One could get the XLE with either the 3.5litre V6 or the Hybrid Synergy Drive system with a four-cylinder engine. This tester came with the more popular 178 horsepower 2.5litre engine, with 170 pound-feet of torque at ready. Performance from this engine is proven and strong. Do not let the engine's specs fool you; the 2.5litre was very happy taking the Camry and its passengers for miles on end.

Connected to the four-cylinder was Toyota's latest six-speed automatic gearbox. Gear changes were smooth and responsive. Power was sent down ultimately to its front wheels, creating good traction in many situations.

When you drive the Camry, you expect it to be comfortable and solid on the road. The Camry rode well, doing its best to absorb road imperfections and other hazards. On smooth tarmac, the Camry just glides along without offense—just very soft and smooth. The penalty of being “soft and smooth” was some lean and roll in the corners and turns. Though controlled, it would be suggested to take it easy when taking a Camry through any winding road.

Turning the Camry induced great response with exact cornering. A bit of numbness exists, but not enough to hinder wheel response. On the flip side, one of my primary complaints about every Camry I drove was its braking action at the pedal. The brakes themselves were good, but the pedal action was still soft. Of note, it was a marked improvement over previous generations of Camrys.

If you asked one of the biggest reasons why people take delivery between 30,000 to 40,000 Camrys every month, it would be the fuel economy. In this very popular segment, we expect the most out of our family transport. The Camry did not disappoint when it turned a

30.4MPG average in fuel consumption. This is a mix of city and highway driving—a remarkable number even without an electric motor attached to the internal combustion engine.

Camrys are a great value, especially for those of us looking for a sedan that does more than the daily commute. You can get a Camry at a starting price of \$22,815. Most of the XLEs on the lot, equipped with the four cylinder engine and cloth seats, are being priced in the \$26,000-27,000 range. The leather-lined, Entune, and navigation-equipped tester topped out at \$29,430. Camrys continue up through the \$30,000 barrier when you add the 3.5litre V6 or the Hybrid Synergy Drive and even more luxuries.

For almost 30 years, the Camry has defined the heart of Toyota's North American lineup. It represents the values of Middle America. It does not offend anyone or pretend to be something that it is not. Among those who have taken delivery of a good percentage of Camrys happen to be our own GLBT community.

However, the segment has been getting better. There is a threat to the Camry's leadership at the top of the passenger car heap, as well as the mid-sized family sedan market. While the two-year-old Hyundai Sonata and Kia Optima built a reputation from their styling departures and solid performance, newer competitors, such as the upcoming Ford Fusion and Nissan Altima, are making their case to topple the Camry from its pedestal.

Frankly, the Camry is a good car. Every improvement was made to ensure its position in the marketplace. This was what Toyota intentioned when they released the newest Camry a year ago.

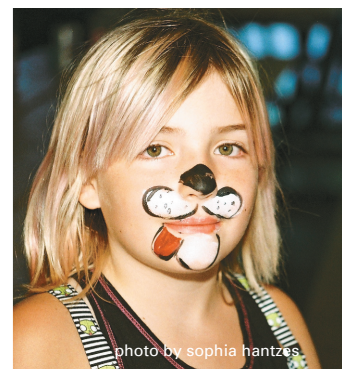
There should be no apologies for driving the best-selling passenger car in the U.S.A.

Randy Stern is an automotive writer from Robbinsdale, Minnesota. He can be followed at *Victory & Reseda* - <http://www.randystern.net>.



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DATELAND | Jennifer Parelo

It Doesn't Add Up

MY GIRLFRIEND, Wendy, and I were sitting on the deck last night, drinking a glass of wine and playing the fun game: Who Has Humiliated Themselves More Over A Girl. I was fairly certain I'd win, because my history of love humiliations has been spectacular. But because my embarrassments were so routine and consistent over the years, they came off as mundane when stacked against my girlfriend's singular humiliation. Yes, that's right...she's 47 years old and has managed to play the fool for love only once. She was a cool customer throughout her dating years, blithely loving and dumping women and leaving a trail of broken hearts right up to my doorstep. (Note to the ladies who have been devastated by my girlfriend: take heart! I make her life a living hell, so she is being well-punished for her callous youth.) Last night, weakened by wine and my merry romp through the tales of my dating shame, she reluctantly admitted to a brief moment when she allowed herself to be vulnerable to love, and, predictably, got kicked in the heart.

Wendy was 21 and was pursued by an ardent 40-year-old lady periodontist. Now, I've never considered this a particularly sexy profession, but, apparently, this broad used her dentist chair to great erotic effect. After the good doctor won Wendy's heart, she proceeded to treat it like something to be washed down her spit sink.

Wendy was accustomed to being the object of desire and was blindsided by the notion that someone else held the upper hand. And the good doctor was using that upper hand to pleasure any number of other youngsters. This left Wendy feeling insecure and desperate to distinguish herself from the herd.

"So, I would drive 300 miles every weekend to see her, and she would always be busy with a patient when I arrived. I didn't want to sit in her waiting room, be-

cause that would have been pathetic. So, instead, I'd tell her that I had work to do myself, and she could meet me at the public library."

Clever girl! She was attempting to take control away from her master. But, what she didn't calculate into her brilliant plan was the fact that she had no important work to complete at the library because she didn't have a job. At the time, she was an itinerant musician, sleeping on floors of the goodhearted of Cambridge, Mass.

So what did she do to convince her lover that she was "an important business person" who demanded respect and attention? She got her hands on a book of accounting spreadsheets (this was in the mid-80's—well before laptops and Excel), and would "study" them until the doctor arrived to collect her.

"I'd stare at them for hours, flipping through the pages and making notations in the margins, because I didn't want her to catch me staring into space when she finally showed up," she said.

"Did she ever ask you what the spreadsheets were for?" I asked.

"No, she never showed any interest. But I thought they made me look quite important," she said.

"Do you think the reason she never showed interest was because she knew that you weren't actually "studying" them? Because why the hell would a folk musician cart around a 50-pound book of non-sensical spreadsheets?" I asked.

Wendy dropped her head in her hands and sighed. "I always assumed that she broke up with me to sleep with someone else, which was humiliating enough. But, really, it was the spreadsheets, wasn't it?"

"It was the spreadsheets," I confirmed, filling up her glass. Then to make her feel better, we looked up the periodontist's web site and spent an hour discussing how ungracefully she had aged. □

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Dear Ms. Behavior:

My boyfriend Peter and I recently saw a movie about the possible destruction of the entire planet by a comet. A small number of randomly-chosen people might be saved by being taken to an underground shelter.

During the movie, Peter whispered that he wouldn't dream of going to the shelter if his number was chosen and mine wasn't. He said he would rather perish with me than be saved without me. I appreciated this romantic sentiment, and it made me feel happy and loved.

The problem is that a few minutes after the movie ended, Peter changed his mind. He said that he hoped that I would go to the shelter without him if it was my only chance to live, and that he might choose to go without me as well. He thought it was the "emotionally healthy" choice. "Why should we both die?" he said.

Meanwhile, most of my friends said that they wouldn't go without their PETS, never mind their partners. So how am I supposed to feel, knowing that Peter would blithely run off to the shelter while I suffered and died, all alone, at home?

And, does this mean that I love Peter more than he loves me?

—ROMANTIC SUCKER

Dear Romantic Sucker:

What delightful fun and drama! You get to experience all the emotions of a terrible loss without actually going through one.

You may be a better, more romantic per-

son than Peter. But the question of whether you'd want to survive without each other might mean something different to each of you. To you, giving up your life to stay with your boyfriend is a symbol of devotion. But to be fair, maybe Peter is by nature a practical survivalist type (admittedly rare among gay men). To such people, loving someone is about being alive with them; death is a departure from their commitment.

"What if..." questions can be distorted. Ultimately, you should judge Peter's level of commitment by how he acts, rather than by posing silly riddles. People sometimes offer definitive answers about what they would do in a crisis, but they're usually only guessing or saying what they would *like* to do. (Ms. Behavior's friend Veronica always swore she'd give her life to protect her partner, Jeanne. But once, when they took a shortcut through a backyard and a Doberman chased them, Veronica instinctively ran into the house and closed the door behind her, leaving Jeanne in the yard with the salivating, teeth-baring dog.)

If Peter loves you less than you love him, you'll know it over time. You'll eventually be forced to either accept the role of the person who loves more, or to someday leave Peter, with the hope of finding someone who can't live if living is without you.

Maybe Peter's definition of "emotionally healthy" has been influenced by the damaging Anti-Enabler Movement. If so, maybe Peter secretly *wants* to die with you or even *for* you but struggles against his feelings be-

cause he's been told they're wrong. Active enablers are the best partners in the world because they never underestimate your worth, and they always put your pleasure and comfort before their own. Recovering enablers, on the other hand, are annoying. They are taught that concern for other people is dangerous. They feel safest reciting the magical anti-codependency mantra: "ME, ME, ME. It's all about ME."

Luring a recovering enabler back to his old ways, however, is as easy as slipping a new non-smoker a Marlboro. In this case, a little concentrated deprogramming followed by temporary withdrawal of your love would quickly remind Peter that he is nothing without you.

A final word of caution: Ms. Behavior suspects that you're the kind of person who might be tempted to regularly pose terrible, unanswerable dilemmas. So, to save you further trauma, the following is a list of questions never to ask your partner:

—"Do you love me more than you've loved anyone else you've ever been with?"

—"If I died, how long would it be before you started dating someone else?"

—"Who's more attractive, me or Ryan Gosling?"

—"If I were in prison for a year, would you be faithful to me?"

—"How about three years?"

—"If you, me, and your mother were in a sinking boat, and there were only two life jackets, who would you give them to?" □

TROLÍN, UN DIABLITO ROSA



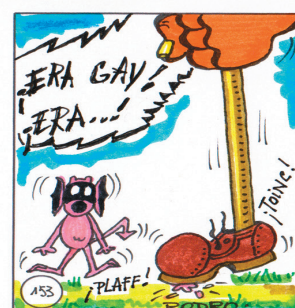
A gay chick...
Un poussin gai...



A gay butterfly...
Un papillon gai...



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It was gay! It was...!
Il était gai! Il était..!

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ADVERTISER INDEX

Adult	Tangletown Gardens 6	Mortgage
Megaphone 65		David Lozinski, First
Squirt 65		Equity Mortgage 6
Arts & Entertainment	Grocery Stores	Network 58 - 61
Chanhasen Dinner Theater 22	Wedge Coop 41	
Jungle Theater 21	Health & Wellness	Organizations
Automotive	Blue Cross Blue Shield 51	Metropolitan Center for Independent
Fiat Minneapolis 67	North Suburban Eye Specialists ... 3	Living 7
LaMettry's Collision 6	Medica 15	Pet Products & Services
Bars & Nightlife	Steele Fitness 2	Animal Humane Society 53
19 Bar 19	University of Minnesota,	Real Estate & Rentals
Gay 90's 15	Infectious Diseases 9	Eichaker, Dean 11
Lush Food Bar 19	YWCA of Minneapolis 11	Restaurants
Town House 17	Home Furnishings & Accessories.	Blackbird Cafe 41
Beauty & Relaxation	Designer Marketplace 37, 52	Burger Moe's 39
Dermatology Consultants 13	Gray Gardens 43	Downtown Woodfire Grill 39
Beverages	Home Services	It's Greek To Me 41
Diageo 68	House Lift Remodeler 11	Jakeeno's Pizza & Pasta 41
Communications	Re-Bath 37	Loring Kitchen & Bar 39
AM950 10	Sedgwick Heating and Air 15	Roast Osha 41
Education	Standard Heating & Air 11	Toast Wine Bar & Cafe 41
Art Institutes International	Stio Roofing and Construction 5	Grandview Grill 41
Minnesota 5	Total Comfort 21	Louisiana Cafe 41
Minneapolis Board of Education 53	Insurance	Uptown Diner 41
William Mitchell College of Law 29	Bartell, Dawn 7	Woodbury Cafe 41
Events	Wolfson, Steve 29	Retail
Duluth Superior GLBT Pride 23	Jewelry	Golden Fig Fine Foods 41
Minneapolis Bike Tour 37	Max's 7	Sports & Recreation
Financial	Legal	Above the Falls Sports 7
Maltaji, Roya 1 1	Cloutier Law Offices 37	Student/Campus/Alumni
Palm, Karen 7	Dean, Jeff 5	University of Minnesota -
Floral & Garden	Heltzer & Houghtaling 15	Rochester 43
Linder's Greenhouses & Garden	Jerry Burg, Attorney at Law 10	Travel & Accommodations
Center 13	Moshier, Becky 7	Minnesuog Acres 29
	Media & Communications	Visit Milwaukee 43
	Minnesota Public Radio 39	
	Radio K 770 13	

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Waltz For a Honeymoon

“ARE YOU ready?” He asks.

I hesitate. There are so many people watching us. So many eyes—some belonging to my friends, others to acquaintances, and few (I can’t reckon how many) to those who don’t like me (some unbeknownst to me, others apparent—their faces indicate as much). “A little nervous,” I say, “but I’m ready.”

1. Closed Position. *Face your partner. If you are the leader, put your right hand on your partner’s waist. To maximize body contact, fix your right hand to your partner’s back. Clasp your partner’s left hand with your own and extend your arm, gracefully, away from your body.*

“I don’t know what I’m doing,” I say. My last foray onto the dance floor ended in embarrassment.

He laughs. “It’s okay,” he says. “I don’t either, really.” He takes the leader’s position. He places his hand on my back.

2. First Beat. *As leader, step forward on the first beat—delicately—with your left foot. Your partner will mirror your movement.*

My heart beats in my head. My palm is in his, and our hands are sticky with sweat. It’s the nerves, partially; infatuation, possibly; passion, definitely. There are a few others dancing in the ballroom tonight, some more gracefully than others. The other duos note our entry to the dance floor, and the veterans smile at us as they glide by, ever so elegantly, with their partners. They nod in welcome. I

smile back at them, nervously.

I focus on the audience occupying the perimeter of the dance floor more than on my partner; they watch our movements and quietly judge our form. They whisper to one another and sometimes giggle. I can’t tell whether they’re laughing because they’re happy to see us dancing, or because they think we shouldn’t be.

He steps on my foot on the first beat. It’s my fault. “I’m sorry,” I say.

3. An Upside-Down “L.” *With the very next beat, move one step forward and to the right with your right foot. Think of this as an upside-down “L.” You’ll trace the letter in the air, gracefully, and not too high, before touching the floor once again.*

It’s hot here. Don’t they have air conditioning? Can people see me sweating? Why aren’t we dancing as well as the others?

“You’re distracted,” he says and holds me tighter. “Don’t worry about everybody else.”

“We didn’t practice much before we came,” I offer.

“No, we didn’t,” he responds, moving me through other motions. I stumble on a few beats, he does so on others. “But we’re here,” he says.

“I’m afraid I’m messing this up. Many people are better at this than I am.”

“I’d rather dance with nobody else.”

4. Final Beat. *On the final beat, slide your right foot to your left foot until your feet*

are together. Now you’re ready to start over with your left foot.

We’ve somehow glided—stumbled, rather—into the middle of the floor, the ballroom veterans still smiling in silent encouragement, the audience still judging, but now more lost in conversations about other newcomers’ performances on the floor.

There are duos that have come onto the floor—and left—since we arrived. There are a couple of tries at a trio, but such a waltz cannot exist, and their attempts end quickly. They’ll take their style to another hall.

“I hope this doesn’t jinx us, but I do believe we’re improving,” he whispers as we enter the second movement.

It occurs to me when he says this that all the smiling couples around us, those who dance the best, are perhaps smiling at us not only because they hope we’ll get the hang of it, but because, for them, it’s nostalgic. The most graceful dancers, I posit, are those with the most practice, of course, but those who have also stumbled the most.

I notice, too, that some of the premature departures from the dance floor danced perfectly well through one or two movements, and then abruptly left—sometimes in pursuit of a new partner, other times due plainly to a loss of interest.

We pay no mind, and my partner and I move now through the second movements, haphazardly, awkwardly, brilliantly...

Our very own Waltz for a Honeymoon.

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